

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BONN 06148 01 OF 02 051713Z  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 INR-10 CIAE-00 NSC-05  
/045 W

-----126945 051812Z /42 S

P R 051657Z APR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY BONN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7364  
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE  
AMEMBASSY BERLA  
LUDKAR/AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST 2191  
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST  
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE  
AMEMBASSY SOFIA  
AMEMBASSY WARSAW  
USMISSION USBERLIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 06148

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PEPR, PGOV, UR, GW  
SUBJECT: BREZHNEV VISIT TO BONN: MAY 4 TO 6, 1978

REFS: (A) BONN 05883 (NODIS); (B) MOSCOW 06526 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: THE FOREIGN OFFICE ATTRIBUTES THE TIMING OF  
THE BREZHNEV VISIT TO AN IMPROVEMENT IN THE SOVIET  
LEADER'S HEALTH AND TO SCHEDULING NECESSITIES HERE. OUR  
CONTACTS ATTACH ONLY SECONDARY IMPORTANCE TO INTER-  
NATIONAL FACTORS SUCH AS THE US-SOVIET RELATIONSHIP.  
PREPARATIONS FOR THE VISIT ARE JUST BEGINNING AND THE  
STATE OF KNOWLEDGE IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE ON SUBSTANCE  
AND ITINERARY IS LIMITED. END SUMMARY.

1. WE DISCUSSED THE BREZHNEV VISIT WITH FOREIGN OFFICE  
DIRECTOR FOR SOVIET AFFAIRS (KUEHN). HE BELIEVED THE  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BONN 06148 01 OF 02 051713Z

PRINCIPAL REASON FOR THE SOVIET DECISION FINALLY TO GO  
AHEAD WITH THE VISIT WAS BASED ON BREZHNEV'S APPARENT  
RECOVERY FROM WHATEVER HEALTH PROBLEMS HAD PREVENTED  
HIS COMING EARLIER THIS YEAR. KUEHN NOTED THAT  
SOVIET AMBASSADOR FALIN HAD MADE CLEAR IN HIS  
CONVERSATION WITH THE CHANCELLOR ON JANUARY 19 THAT  
BREZHNEV'S INDISPOSITION WAS THE SOLE REASON FOR THE

POSTPONEMENT OF HIS FEBRUARY VISIT. FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIALS WERE INCLINED TO ACCEPT THIS REASONING THEN AND FEEL THAT THEIR ANALYSIS HAS BEEN BORNE OUT. KUEHN ALSO BELIEVED THE SOVIETS WERE ANXIOUS TO PUT TO REST NEGATIVE SPECULATION ABOUT BREZHNEV'S HEALTH. HIS VISIT TO BONN WOULD IN A SENSE BE HIS RETURN TO THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA.

2. KUEHN SAID THE SOVIETS WERE AWARE THAT, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF EARLY MAY AND A BRIEF WINDOW IN JUNE, THE CHANCELLOR'S OWN SCHEDULE PRECLUDED A VISIT UNTIL THE FALL. HENCE, THEY MOVED QUICKLY TO SCHEDULE THE VISIT ON SHORT NOTICE ONCE THEY WERE CONVINCED BREZHNEV'S HEALTH HAD IMPROVED TO THE POINT WHERE HE COULD STAND THE RIGORS OF A STATE VISIT.

3. WHILE KUEHN ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE UNCERTAIN STATE OF US-SOVIET RELATIONS MIGHT HAVE PLAYED A ROLE IN SOVIET DECISION, HE ATTACHED ONLY SECONDARY IMPORTANCE TO SUCH SPECULATION. HE THOUGHT THE SOVIET DESIRE TO OVERCOME THE STAGNATION IN EAST-WEST RELATIONS MAY ALSO HAVE BEEN A FACTOR. ANOTHER FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIAL HAS SUGGESTED TO US THAT BREZHNEV MAY HAVE CHOSEN THIS TIMING AS A MEANS OF EXERTING PRESSURE ON THE FRG PRIOR TO A NATO SUMMIT DECISION ON ERW.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BONN 06148 01 OF 02 051713Z

4. AT THE MOMENT, THE STATE OF KNOWLEDGE ON THE VISIT IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE IS LIMITED. THE SOVIETS HAVE SAID ONLY THAT BREZHNEV WILL ARRIVE ON MAY 4 AND DEPART ON THE 6TH. IT IS NOT YET CLEAR WHEN HE WILL ARRIVE AND DEPART ON THOSE DAYS. NOR DO THE GERMANS HAVE ANY IDEA WHETHER BREZHNEV PLANS TO LIMIT HIS VISIT TO BONN. THE SOVIETS HAVE GIVEN NO INDICATION OF WHO WILL ACCOMPANY BREZHNEV, THOUGH THE GERMANS ASSUME THAT GROMYKO WILL DO SO--DESPITE REPORTS THAT HE IS IN POOR HEALTH. FOREIGN OFFICE STATE SECRETARY VAN WELL WILL MEET WITH FALIN ON FRIDAY, APRIL 7 AND THE GERMANS HOPE TO RESOLVE SOME OF THESE OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS.

4. THE SOVIET EMBASSY HAS MADE CLEAR THAT THE VISIT SHOULD BE MAINLY POLITICAL WITH A MINIMUM OF PROTOCOL. (IN PART, THE GERMANS SPECULATE, TO SPARE BREZHNEV.) THE FOREIGN OFFICE IS JUST BEGINNING TO FOCUS ON THE SUBSTANCE OF THE VISIT AND ON WHAT MIGHT BE DONE TO MAKE IT A POLITICAL SUCCESS. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD BY A VARIETY OF SOURCES THAT NO PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE ON THE THREE AGREEMENTS HELD UP OVER THE

NOTE BY OC/T: DISTRIBUTION COORDINATED WITH S/S-O - MS. ROBINSON.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BONN 06148 02 OF 02 051709Z  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 INR-10 CIAE-00 NSC-05  
/045 W

-----126837 051814Z /42 S

P R 051657Z APR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY BONN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7365  
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE  
AMEMBASSY BERLIN  
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST  
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST  
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE  
AMEMBASSY SOFIA  
AMEMBASSY WARSAW  
USMISSION USBERLIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 06148

INCLUSION OF BERLIN. THE FRG BONN GROUP REP HAS  
EXPRESSED THE OPINION THAT THE BREZHNEV VISIT PRESENTS  
THE ONLY FORESEEABLE OPPORTUNITY FOR A BREAKTHROUGH ON  
THE BERLIN ISSUE AND THAT, UNLESS IT IS RESOLVED IN  
CONNECTION WITH THE VISIT, THESE BILATERAL AGREEMENTS  
WILL PROBABLY NEVER BE CONCLUDED. NEVERTHELESS, HE  
SPECULATES THAT THE ODDS ARE 80 TO 20 AGAINST REACHING  
AGREEMENT.

5. COMMENT: WE TEND TO SHARE KUEHN'S VIEW THAT  
BREZHNEV'S APPARENT RECOVERY AND THE NECESSITIES OF  
SCHEDULING WERE THE PRIMARY DETERMINANTS OF THE VISIT.  
IT IS NOT YET CLEAR TO US WHAT THE GERMANS ARE PREPARED  
TO DO ON SUBSTANCE. WE DO NOT, FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE ANY  
INDICATION THAT THE FRG, AND PARTICULARLY GENSCHER, IS  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BONN 06148 02 OF 02 051709Z

PREPARED TO BUDGE ON THE BERLIN QUESTION. AT THIS JUNCTURE, IT APPEARS LIKELY THAT THE VISIT WILL FOCUS ON THE SECURITY AND ECONOMIC SPHERES.

THUS FAR, THE SOVIETS ARE MAKING LITTLE EFFORT TO WARM UP THE CLIMATE PRIOR TO BREZHNEV'S ARRIVAL. WE NOTE, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT THE SOVIET FLAG TOUR INTRUSION INTO PRESIDENT SCHEEL'S BERLIN MOTORCADE TOOK PLACE TWO DAYS AFTER MOSCOW INFORMED THE GERMANS OF THE VISIT. IN ADDITION, IZVESTIYA WAS STILL WARNING THE GERMANS ON APRIL 3 OF THE "UNPLEASANT CONSEQUENCES" WHICH MIGHT FOLLOW A POSITIVE GERMAN DECISION ON ERW.  
STOESSEL

NOTE BY OC/T: DISTRIBUTION COORDINATED WITH S/S-O - MS. ROBINSON.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** HEALTH, FOREIGN RELATIONS, HEAD OF GOVERNMENT VISITS, VISITS, CAT-C  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 05 apr 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1978BONN06148  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D780169-0656, N780004-0275  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** BONN  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1978/newtext/t19780488/aaaacwnf.tel  
**Line Count:** 190  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** b6a15cb5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** NODIS, ONLY  
**Page Count:** 4  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** NODIS, ONLY  
**Reference:** 78 BONN 5883, 78 MOSCOW 6526  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 19 may 2005  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 3060486  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** BREZHNEV VISIT TO BONN: MAY 4 TO 6, 1978  
**TAGS:** PEPR, PGOV, UR, GE, (BREZHNEV, LEONID I)  
**To:** STATE SS  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/b6a15cb5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014